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Message Text

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16
ACTION EA-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /008 W
---------- 096403
R 050157Z AUG 74
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USMISSION GENEVA
USDEL JEC PARIS
USUN NEW YORK 0684
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
USLO PEKING
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
SECSTATE WASHDC 7438

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 9835/1

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, VS, VN
SUBJECT: GVN EFFORTS TO ARRIVE AT A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN SVN

FOLLOWING SAIGON 9835 SENT ACTION SECTATE WASHDC, CINCPAC HONOLULU,
USIA, AMEMBASSIES BUDAPEST, JAKARTA, TEHRAN AND WARSAW
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JULY 25, 1974 IS REPEATED TO YOU:

QUOTE
UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 9835/1

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, VS, VN
SUBJECT: GVN EFFORTS TO ARRIVE AT A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN
SVN

REF: (A) SAIGON 8557;
(B) SAIGON 9157

1. ALL ADDRESSEES RECEIVED ONE OF THE TWO REFERENCES ABOVE WHICH SET FORTH EMBASSY SAIGON'S ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS IN THE TWO PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION (TPJMC) AND THE FOUR PARTY JOINT MILITARY TEAM (FPJMT). IN ORDER TO PERMIT ADDRESSEES TO MEET THE HANOI PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN CLAIMING THAT IT IS THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT WHICH BLOCKS A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM, EMBASSY SAIGON HAS PREPARED THE FOLLOWING UNCLASSIFIED ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS WHICH MAY BE USEFUL.

2. BEGIN TEXT: GVN EFFORTS TO ARRIVE AT A POLITICAL SETTLE-
MENT.
IT IS OFTEN CLAIMED THAT PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN THIEU OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM IS BLOCKING A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH AS IS SHOWN BY AN ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL POSITIONS OF THE TWO SIDES, ESPECIALLY AS SET FORTH IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE AT LA CELLE-ST. CLOUD NEAR PARIS. THESE TALKS BEGAN MARCH 19, 1973, AND THE LAST SESSION SO FAR TOOK PLACE APRIL 12, 1974.

3. IN THE COURSE OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM HAS ENDEAVORED TO ARRIVE AT A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT WHICH WOULD CULMINATE IN GENERAL ELECTIONS. THE COMMUNIST SIDE, ON THE CONTRARY, HAS PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD TEND TO DELAY AN ELECTION INDEFINITELY, WHILE MEASURES WERE ADOPTED WHICH WOULD LEAVE THE COMMUNIST SIDE FREE TO CONTINUE THE USE OF TERROR, INTIMIDATION AND SUBVERSION UNACCEPTABLE IN ANY DE-
MOCRATIC SOCIETY IN ORDER TO WEAKEN AND EVENTUALLY OVERTHROW
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THE GVN. IF THE "PRG" WERE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS EFFORT, OF COURSE NO"FREE AND DEMOCRATIC" ELECTIONS COULD BE HELD AS CALLED FOR BY THE PARIS AGREEMENT. THE COMMON ASSUMPTION UNDERLYING THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO SIDES IS AN AWARENESS THAT THE GVN SIDE WOULD WIN ANY REASONABLY FAIR ELECTORAL CONTEST HELD IN SOUTH VIETNAM BY A VERY LARGE MARGIN. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE COMMUNISTS SO FAR HAVE BEEN UNWILLING TO CONSIDER

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE. THUS THE POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS HAVE EXPOSED THE FUNDAMENTAL REASON FOR CONTINUATION OF THE CONFLICT IN VIETNAM: INVASION OF SOUTH VIETNAM BY AN ARMY FROM THE NORTH WHICH ENJOYS VIRTUALLY NO POPULAR SUPPORT AMONG THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIETNAM.

4. THE FOREGOING GENERAL REMARKS ARE CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED IN THE NEGOTIATING POSITIONS OF THE TWO SIDES. THE COMMUNISTS HAVE BASED THEIR PROPOSALS ON SIX POINTS WHICH HAVE CHANGED LITTLE SINCE THEY WERE FIRST ADVANCED APRIL 25, 1973. THESE SIX POINTS COVER THE FOLLOWING MATTERS: CEASE-FIRE, RETURN OF PRISONERS, DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD (NCNRC), GENERAL ELECTIONS, AND ARMED FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM. THE COMMUNISTS STATED EXPLICITLY WHEN PRESENTING THESE POINTS THAT THE FIRST FOUR HAD TO BE SETTLED AND AGREED BEFORE THE LAST TWO COULD EVEN BE DISCUSSED. THUS THE COMMUNISTS WERE SEEKING TO GIVE THEMSELVES A FREE HAND TO CONTINUE INTIMIDATION OF THE POPULATION AND SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE GVN WITH NO GUARANTEE THAT THE PROCESS WOULD ULTIMATELY RESULT IN GENUINELY FREE ELECTIONS TO EXERCISE THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE. THE SUBJECTS OF GREATEST CONCERN TO THE GVN, I.E., ELECTIONS AND THE STATUS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM, WERE RELEGATED TO A SECOND STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS WHICH MIGHT NEVER TAKE PLACE. THE LATEST VERSION OF THE SIX POINT PROPOSAL SET FORTH MARCH 22, 1974, APPEARS TO BE A LITTLE MORE FORTHCOMING ON THE QUESTION OF ELECTIONS, PROPOSING THEY BE HELD AT THE LATEST ONE YEAR AFTER FORMATION OF THE NCNRC. HOWEVER, THIS PROPOSAL IS HEDGED WITH CONDITIONS THAT WOULD MAKE IT EASY FOR THE COMMUNIST SIDE TO DELAY ELECTIONS. THE COMMUNISTS MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WOULD NOT SETTLE ANY POINT OF THE SIX UNTIL THE PREVIOUS POINT HAS BEEN SETTLED TO THEIR SATISFACTION. THUS THEY COULD AT ANY POINT FIND A PRETEXT
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TO BLOCK ELECTIONS INDEFINITELY.

5. THE COMMUNISTS ARE ALSO TRYING TO TAKE PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGE OF THE APPEAL OF TERMS SUCH AS"CEASE-FIRE", "POLITICAL PRISONERS" AND "DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES". IN FACT IT IS THE COMMUNISTS WHO HAVE CONTINUED INFILTRATION OF MEN AND ARMS INTO SOUTH VIETNAM, WHO HAVE REFUSED TO EVEN DISCUSS THE MODALITIES FOR OPERATION OF ENTRY POINTS FOR REPLACEMENT OF MILITARY ITEMS PERMITTED BY THE PARIS AGREEMENT, AND WHO HAVE VIOLATED THE CEASE-FIRE ON A LARGE SCALE, IN PARTICULAR BY SYSTEMATICALLY BESIEGING AND TAKING OVER GVN MILITARY POSTS IN THE CENTRAL PART OF THE COUNTRY. FURTHERMORE, THE GVN LAST JANUARY PROPOSED FOUR CONCRETE MEASURES THAT WOULD HAVE VIRTUALLY ENDED CIVILIAN CASUALTIES AND DRASTICALLY LOWERED THE OVERALL LEVEL OF VIOLENCE. THE COMMU-

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NISTS HAVE REFUSED TO DISCUSS THIS " DIRTY TRICK" PROPOSAL.
AT THE SAME TIME THE COMMUNISTS HAVE RENDERED INEFFECTIVE THE
TWO PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMI-
SSION OF CONTROL AND SUPERVISION (ICCS) WHICH ARE THE VERY INS-
TITUTIONS DESIGNED TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE CEASE-FIRE POSSIBLE.

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 OMB-01 DPW-01 AID-20

DRC-01 IO-14 /151 W
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O 251105Z JUL 74
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
CINCPAC HONOLULU
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7163
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USIA WASHDC

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6. AS FOR PRISONER RETURNS, THE GVN HAS RETURNED ALL OF THE
PRISONERS OF THE OTHER SIDE IT HELD AT THE TIME OF THE CEASE-FIRE:
26,876 MILITARY PERSONNEL (A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF WHICH THE
COMMUNISTS HAVE SIMPLY REINTERGRATED INTO THEIR ARMED FORCES IN
THE SOUTH) AND 5,081 CIVILIANS. THE COMMUNIST SIDE HAS RELEASED
ONLY 5,408 MILITARY MEN AND 637 CIVILIANS EVEN THOUGH IT IS
KNOWN TO HOLD MANY MORE. THE COMMUNIST SIDE CONTINUES TO
ALLEGE THE GVN HOLDS 200,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS. THE US
EMBASSY IN SAIGON HAS CONDUCTED AN EXHAUSTIVE INVENTORY OF ALL
DETENTION FACILITIES IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND HAS CONCLUDED THAT THEIR
TOTAL CAPACITY IS ONLY ABOUT 50,000; AND THAT THE TOTAL PRISON
POPULATION(I.E., COMMON CRIMINLAS, DESERTERS, ETC.) AS OF
AUGUST 1973 WAS ONLY ABOUT 35,000. (THIS NUMBER HAS BEEN FURTHER

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REDUCED SINCE THAT TIME THROUGH AMNESTIES AND PERSONNEL RE-
LEASES TO THE OTHER SIDE.) THE US MISSION IN SAIGON HAS BEEN
ENDEAVORING TO MAKE POSITIVE INDENTIFICATION OF EVEN ONE POLITICAL
PRISONER, IN THE SENSE OF SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN JAILED ONLY BE-
CAUSE OF HIS PEACEFUL OPPOSITION TO THE GOERNMENT RATHER THAN FOR
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A LW VIOLATION, BUT SO FAR HAS BEEN UNABLE TO FIND A CLEAR-CUT
CASE.

7. AS FOR DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES, IT MUST FIRST BE NOTED THAT A
VOCAL OPPOSITION IS ACTIVE IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND THAT A NUMBER OF
DAILY NEWSPAPERS REGULARLY CRITICIZE THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION.
THOSE RESTRICTIONS ON PERSONAL LIBERTY THAT DO EXIST ARE SURPRIS-
INGLY LIGHT FOR A COUNTRY AT WAR. THE COMMUNISTS WOULD OBVIOUSLY
LIKE TO USE THE PARIS AGREEMENT AS A LEVER TO OBTAIN A FREE HAND
TO PROPAGANDIZE AND INTIMIDATE THE POPULATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM.
IN FACT, THROUGH ASSASSINATIONS, ABDUCTIONS AND TERRORISM
COMMUNIST CADRE ARE VIOLATING THE DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES OF THE
SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE EVERY DAY. MEANWHILE REPORTS INDICATE
INCREASING REGINENTATION OF THAT SMALL PART OF THE POPULATION WHICH
CAN BE CONSIDERED UNDER "PRG" CONTROL, AND ONE CAN WONDER
WHETHER THE "PRG" WOULD IN FACT EVER PERMIT GVN REPRE-
SENTATIVES TO CIRCULATE FREELY IN ITS AREAS.

8. GVN PROPOSALS FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, OF WHICH THE FIRST
WAS APRIL 25, 1973, AND THE LATEST MARCH 29, 1974, HAVE EMPHASIZED
THE IMPORTANCE OF FIXING A DATE FOR THE "GENUINELY FREE AND
DEMOCRATIC GENERAL ELECTIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL SUPERVISION"
CALLED FOR BY THE AGREEMENT. WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A
TIMETABLE FOR ELECTIONS, THE GVN BELIEVES A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION
FOR ALL OTHER ISSUES CAN BE FOUND. THE GVN HOLDS THAT THE
QUESTIONS OF CEASE-FIRE AND PERSONNEL RETURN ARE APPROPRIATELY
CONSIDERED BY THE TPJMC AND THE ICCS RATHER THAN IN THE PARIS
TALKS. THE LATEST GVN PROPOSALS CALL FOR THESE TWO QUESTIONS TO BE
RESOLVED BY THE TPJMC AND THE ICCS IN PARALLEL WITH THE RESOLUTION
OF THE POLITICAL ISSUES IN PARIS. THE GVN PROPOSES FURTHER THAT
FOUR COMMISSIONS BE ESTABLISHED TO DISCUSS SIMULTANEOURSLY THE
MATTERS TO WHICH THE "PRG" GIVES PRIORITY--DEMOCRATIC
LIBERTIES AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NCNRC--AND THE TWO QUESTIONS
THE GVN WISHES TO EMPHASIZE--ELECTIONS AND REDUCTION OF ARMED
FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM. THE GVN POSITION IN THAT THESE COM-
MISSIONS SHOULD ATTEMPT TO COMPLETE THEIR WORK IN 30 DAYS IN
ORDER TO ARRIVE AT A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMEN, AND UPON SIGNATURE OF
THIS AGREEMENT THE NCNRC WOULD HAVE 30 DAYS IN WHICH TO AGREE
ON ELECTION PROCEDURES.

9. THE GVN HAS ALSO MADE VARIOUS PROCEDURAL PROPOSALS TO
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ACHIEVE PROGRESS IN PARIS: AGREEMENT TO AVOID POLEMICS, AGREEMENT TO KEEP THE TALKS TRULY SECRET, AND AGREEMENT TO HOLD PRIVATE TALKS AT THE DELEGATION CHIEF LEVEL. THE COMMUNIST SIDE HAS REJECTED ALL THESE SUGGESTIONS, CLEARLY DEMONSTRATING IT HAD NO INTEREST IN REACHING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND ONLY WISHED TO USETHESE TALKS FOR PROPAGANDA.

10. ASIDE FROM THE PARIS TALKS, GVN FOREIGN MINISTER VUONG VAN BAC ON JANUARY 26, 1974 AND AGAIN MAY 16 PROPOSED THAT HE MEET WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM OR ANY OTHER HIGH-RANKING HANOI REPRESENTATIVE TO NEGOTIATE REESTABLISHMENT OF NORMAL RELATIONS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH AS CALLED FOR BY ARTICLE 15 OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT. MINISTER BAC'S PREDCESSOR, TRAN VAN LAM, HAD PREVIOUSLY MADE SIMILIAR PROPOSALS. ALL WERE REJECTED BY HANOI.

11. IN THE FACE OF CONTINUED COMMUNIST INFILTRATION AND HOSTILE MILITARY ACTION, AND OF COMMUNIST REFUSAL TO PERMIT THE ICCS TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY OR TO PAY THEIR FAIR SHARE OF ITS COSTS, AS WELL AS REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY IN THE LA CELLE ST. CLOUD TALKS, THE GVN ANNOUNCED APRIL 16, 1974, THAT IT WOULD SUSPEND ITS PARTICIPATION IN THESE TALKS UNTIL THE COMMUNIST SIDE PROVED ITS GOOD WILL THOUGH CONCRETE ACTS. ON MAY 13, 1974, AS PART OF THEIR PATTERN OF BREAKING OFF ALL NEGOTIATIONS, THE "PRG" SUSPENDED ITS PARTICIPATION IN THESE TALKS "COMPLETELY AND INDEFINITELY", STATING THAT FOR THE TALKS TO RESUME THE GVN MUST STOP ITS "SABOTAGE" OF THE AGREEMENT AND GIVE A "POSITIVE RESPONSE" TO THE "PRG'S" SIX-POINT PROPOSAL OF MARCH 22, 1974. THUS AS THIS ANALYSIS IS WRITTEN THE TALKS ARE SUSPENDED.

12. IN CONCLUSION, THE RECORD OF THE PARIS TALKS DEMONSTRATES CLEARLY THAT THE GVN HAS ENDEAVORED TO REACH A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, AND THAT IT IS THE COMMUNIST SIDE WHICH HAS AVOIDED AGREEMENT OR EVEN SERIOUS DISCUSSION. END TEXT
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